

Top Six Questions from Providers about YoungStar

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1. How does YoungStar work?

- A. **Providers Apply.** Providers who want to participate in YoungStar do so by filling out a YoungStar Contract. The YoungStar Contract is available on the [Providers](#) section of the YoungStar web site.

Step-by-step instructions for filling out the YoungStar Contract are also available on the **Providers** web page. These instructions will help providers to decide if they want someone to come into their program to work on quality initiatives or not. However, if a provider wants help choosing their rating, the local YoungStar offices can help.

When a provider has completed the YoungStar Contract, he or she sends the YoungStar Contract in to the local YoungStar office in their area. Click the link below to find your local YoungStar office:

[Find my local YoungStar office](#)

A Note about Rating: Providers can accumulate points in a number of different categories to earn a YoungStar rating. There are minimum amounts of points that providers must earn in one star level before moving to the next. Providers can use the following documents to help learn about which points are available to them and what minimum requirement must be met before moving from one star level to the next:

YoungStar Point Details: [Group](#) [Family](#) [School-Age](#)
[YoungStar Minimum Point Requirements](#)

- B. **Local YoungStar Offices Process Applications.** When the local YoungStar office receives the YoungStar Contract someone from the office will contact the provider to let the provider know that their forms have been received.

If a provider requested to have an Automated Rating (they do not want someone to come into their program for Technical Assistance), the local YoungStar office will enter this information into the YoungStar case management system and a rating will be generated.

If the provider requested Technical Assistance to help prepare for rating, the local YoungStar office will send out a letter or email to the provider to notify them that the office receive their application. Then, the provider will be contacted to set up their first Technical Assistance visit as outlined in Step C below.

Below are the evaluation criteria used to rate providers:

[Evaluation Criteria for Group Providers](#)

[Evaluation Criteria for Family Providers](#)

[Evaluation Criteria for School-Age Providers](#)

- C. **Technical Assistance Is Given to Providers.** If a provider has requested Technical Assistance, then within four (4) weeks of receiving the completed application forms, staff from the local YoungStar office will contact the provider and set up the first Technical Assistance visit with the provider.

At that first visit, the Technical Consultant will come to the program and, in partnership with the program director/provider, identify areas that are opportunities for change. The Technical Consultant will then work with the provider to make a plan for using the time they have together and follow through on these plans over the course of sixteen (16) weeks. During this time, the provider, in partnership with the Technical Consultant, will decide what the provider's micro-grant will be used for based on the goals identified in the quality improvement plan. After the provider has received the desired Technical Assistance, the program will then be ready for a Technical Rating or a Formal Rating with Observation.

- D. **Provider Is Rated.** The rating will happen in one of two ways:

1. If the provider has chosen a **Technical Rating**, after the requested Technical Assistance has been provided, the Technical Consultant will verify and/or observe information from the provider and enter that information into the YoungStar automated system. Then, a Technical Rating will be generated for the provider based upon the information the Technical Consultant entered and the provider's verified education and training information received from The Registry.

The Technical Consultant will then review the Technical Rating with the provider, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) will post the Technical Rating on the YoungStar web site.

OR

2. If a provider has chosen a **Formal Rating with Observation** and would like Technical Assistance, the provider will complete a Formal Rating with Observation Request form and send it to the local YoungStar office. Within four (4) weeks of the completion of the Technical Assistance, a Rating Observer will make an unannounced visit to the program to do a Formal Rating with Observation.

The Rating Observer will then review the Formal Rating with the provider, and DCF will post the Formal Rating on the YoungStar web site.

2. How do I apply for YoungStar?

Providers who want to participate in YoungStar do so by filling out the YoungStar Contract. The YoungStar Contract is available on the [For Providers](#) section of the YoungStar web site.

Step-by-step instructions for filling out the YoungStar Contract is also available on the For Providers web page. These instructions and forms will help providers to decide if they want Technical Assistance and to choose the type of rating they want: Automated, Technical or Formal Rating with Observation. However, if a provider wants help choosing their rating, the local YoungStar offices can help.

When a provider has completed the YoungStar Contract, he or she sends the YoungStar Contract in to the local YoungStar office in their area. Click the link below to find your local YoungStar office:

[Find my local YoungStar office](#)

3. Who can participate in YoungStar and who must participate in YoungStar? What about School Age care?

Mandatory

Programs that currently serve children who receive Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy must participate in YoungStar in order to continue to receive Wisconsin Shares after July 1, 2012.

Voluntary

Programs that currently serve children but who do not accept Wisconsin Shares can participate in YoungStar right now.

School-Age Care

As of March 1, 2012, school-age programs can apply to be part of YoungStar. School-age programs that accept Wisconsin Shares must apply to YoungStar by July 1, 2012 or they will not be eligible for Wisconsin Shares funding.

4. How will this affect my Wisconsin Shares payments and what is tiered reimbursement?

Tiered reimbursement is a system that recognizes child care programs that go beyond the requirements of State licensing and registration regulations by paying higher Wisconsin Shares rates for higher star level ratings in YoungStar.

Beginning July 1, 2012, programs will be paid at the following levels according to their YoungStar rating:

One Star=Not eligible to participate in YoungStar ¹
Two Stars = -5%
Three Stars = No Change in Wisconsin Shares Reimbursement Rate
Four Stars = +5%
Five Stars = +10% ²

5. What if I'm accredited? What is accreditation and which accreditation bodies are accepted as equivalent to YoungStar?

Accreditation is a voluntary process designed to improve the quality of early and school-age care programs. Accreditation systems require programs to meet standards that exceed minimum State regulatory requirements. Achieving accreditation involves extensive self-study and validation by professionals outside the program to verify that quality standards are met. Research has demonstrated that accreditation positively impacts early and school-age care program quality, including benefits to children, families, and staff.

¹ Providers are given one star if they are out of regulatory compliance. If a provider is out of regulatory compliance they are not eligible to receive Wisconsin Shares payments. Any provider who is in regulatory compliance and participating in YoungStar will automatically receive at least two stars.

² Beginning in January 2013, the programs that earn five-star ratings will begin to receive Wisconsin Shares reimbursement rates that are +25%.

As of 1/1/2012, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) accepts accreditation from the following accrediting organizations as equivalent to four or five stars in YoungStar (dependent upon provider education as verified by The Registry):

[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)
[City of Madison](#)
[Satellite Accreditation](#) (in Madison)
[Head Start Performance Standards](#) (with no deficiencies identified in granting agency federal triennial review)
[Early Learning Leaders](#)
[National Association for Family Child Care \(NAFCC\)](#)
[Council on Accreditation](#) (COA)

If a provider is accredited through one of these accrediting bodies and has not cared for children who receive Wisconsin Shares subsidies in the past, that provider may need to send his or her certificate of accreditation to DCF for verification. If you would like to email or fax your accreditation certification or if you have questions about your accreditation status, please use the following contact information:

Fax: 608-267-2200

Email: childcare@wisconsin.gov

Future Acceptance of More Accreditations:

DCF will consider accepting additional accreditations in the future through a process that reviews and compares the accreditations' demonstrated competencies to those of the NAEYC standards.

6. Where can I get training, Technical Assistance, support and micro-grants if I participate in YoungStar? Who rates me?

The local YoungStar offices located around the state have been charged with providing training, Technical Assistance and support for providers who participate in YoungStar. The local YoungStar offices will also be charged with assigning a YoungStar rating to providers in their area and administering micro-grants.

Technical Consultants who do Technical Assistance for child care providers in YoungStar will be based out of each local YoungStar office. Providers may contact the local YoungStar office with any questions or concerns about YoungStar.

Click the link below to find your local YoungStar office:

[Find my local YoungStar office](#)

If a provider is confused about which local YoungStar office to call, he or she may call the main YoungStar line:

1-888-713-KIDS

Other resources for your program can be found at the links below.

- Education
 - Find an [Institution of Higher Education](#) in your area
 - [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood @ Wisconsin Scholarships](#)
 - Wisconsin Early Childhood Association [Credit for Prior Learning Information](#)
- Training
 - Find a [Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporter Training](#)
 - Social and Emotional Development [Pyramid Model Implementation](#)
 - [Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards](#)

- Information For Early Childhood Professionals
 - [Celebrate Children Foundation](#)
 - [Supporting Families Together Association](#)
 - [The Registry](#)
 - [Wisconsin Early Childhood Association](#)
 - [Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners](#)
- Resources—see the [Provider Tips and Tools](#) page